



*State of Louisiana*  
DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF STATE TRAVEL

M. J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

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COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

April 23, 2001

TRAVEL MEMORANDUM # 04-01

TO: All Department Heads, Elected Officials, Colleges and Universities,  
Boards and Commissions

FROM: Jimmie Sanders *JS*  
Travel Director

RE: Airfare Exceptions

There have been an increased number of agencies seeking approval to purchase airline tickets from other than the state contracted travel agency. Many of the requests state that the employee was not aware of the state travel policy. Other requests indicate that the employee understood that the state travel agency was to be used to purchase state contract airfares but if they were purchasing a ticket at a lower cost than state contract, they could purchase the ticket elsewhere. This is not in accordance with the State's travel regulations.

The travel policy as stated in Policy and Procedure Memorandum 49 has been in existence for approximately 12 years. Procedures to purchase airline tickets are defined in PPM 49. **It is each agency's responsibility to ensure that employees who are required to travel are aware of all state travel requirements.**

In addition the State Travel Office's position on the use of Internet websites is that they may be used as a "looking tool" not a "booking tool". If an employee has found a low airfare on the Internet, they should advise the contracted travel agency of this airfare and determine if they can access the low fare.

If the contracted travel agency is not used, an employee must seek approval for this exception from the State Travel Office prior to the purchase of the ticket. Travel exceptions will only be approved when documentation of savings can be determined when a low airfare is compared to the lowest ticket price that can be issued from the state travel agency. Employees should route any such request through the agency's designated travel coordinator.

Over the past years the State Travel Office has been lenient in granting approvals so that your employees would not suffer "out of pocket" expenses for an agency's lack of disseminating travel information. It is strongly recommended to include guidance for travel regulations with your new employee orientation program.

I appreciate the continued efforts required by your agency to communicate the travel policy to all employees and welcome any comments or suggestions to better our department. Thank you.